

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claims 17-20 have been canceled to incorporate allowable content into the independent claims.

It is noted that Applicant specifically states that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Claims 1-10 and 12-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Carpenter (U.S. Patent No. 6,067,603). Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Carpenter, in view of Hassoun, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,737,757). The Examiner indicates that claims 17-20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent format.

Applicant submits that incorporation of the allowable contents of canceled claims 17-20 into the independent claims renders moot these rejections.

FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-16, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

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